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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9464
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 9122
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 2783
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 2927
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0038

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 002398

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DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CCA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/29/2017

TAGS: [ETRD](#) [ETTC](#) [PREL](#) [CU](#) [IT](#)

SUBJECT: ITALY AND CUBA: NSC-DIRECTED REVIEW FOR LIBERTAD
TITLE III WAIVER

REF: STATE 158768

Classified By: A/Pol M/C Jonathan Cohen, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[¶1.](#) (U) This is post's response to reftel request for updated information necessary for the President's consideration of continued suspension of Title III of the LIBERTAD Act.

[¶2.](#) (C) There has been little change in Italian relations with Cuba over the past six months. The most significant event was a visit by Cuban Deputy FM Eumelio Caballero to Rome in October 16-19 to participate in the Italy-Latin America Institute's biannual conference. His meeting with MFA Undersecretary for Latin America and the Caribbean Donato Di Santo was "void of substance," according to Cuba Desk Officer Paolo Bonissone. Caballero asked Di Santo about the possibility of a visit to Cuba by FM D'Alema, which Di Santo rejected out of hand, saying there could be no visit without the opportunity to meet with the political opposition.

[¶3.](#) (C) The Italian Embassy in Havana continued to meet with opposition leaders as part of Italy's two-track approach to engage both Cuban government officials and the opposition. Italy did not participate in exchange programs with Cuba. There was no significant change in the level of Italian investment, joint ventures, or tourism in Cuba. The most substantial Italian investment in Cuba remained Telecom Italia's 27 percent ownership stake in Etecsa, the Cuban telecom monopoly.

[¶4.](#) (C) Comment: Embassy Rome recommends the continuation of Italy's waiver under Title III of the LIBERTAD Act. Post believes the waiver helps Italy maintain positions critical of the GOC. End Comment.
SPOGLI